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JASON BRUDER, EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/28/2016

TAGS: PREL PTER NO

SUBJECT: (S) PKK TERRORISM DEMARCHE DELIVERED - NORWAY

REF: A. 06/16/06 EMAIL FROM J. BRUDER TO E. NYMAN

(CLASSIFIED)
1B. STATE 86417

Classified By: Acting Pol/Econ Counselor Doug Apostol,
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) Summary. On June 28 we delivered ref. b points to Kari Bjornsgaard, Adviser in the MFA's Section for European Regional and Economic Affairs. Bjornsgaard noted that Norway would cooperate with U.S. law enforcement efforts tracing PKK funding mechanisms, while emphasizing that her country's recent recognition of U.N. designated terrorist organization (while abandoning the E.U. terrorist list) should not be viewed as Norway's acceptance of the PKK's "legitimacy." End Summary.

¶2. (S) Bjornsgaard believes that Norway's intelligence and law enforcement agencies would support cooperation with their U.S. counterparts in order to disrupt PKK criminal financial support networks and funding mechanisms. She recalls only one incident of PKK funding in Norway (which is still under investigation). The incident occurred "a couple of years ago," and involved the flow of funds from the AKP (Norwegian Communist Party) to PKK coffers in Turkey. She could not elaborate upon the investigation's status.

¶3. (S) She noted that that the Turkish Embassy "occasionally" inquires about the PKK, but they are not pressing the Norwegians on this matter. Our meetings with Acting Political Counselor Ilknur Bademli (who is filling in for a sparsely staffed Turkish Embassy) suggested the opposite, as she emphasized that the PKK's funding mechanisms (and possible influence with Norwegian parliamentarians) were serious concerns.

¶4. (S) Bjornsgaard claims that no PKK officials have been in direct contact with the MFA. She did recall a visit from two Turkish mayors (in Kurdish dominated areas) "a few months back" who, although not from the PKK, "may" have had officials in their delegation who "could possibly" have been PKK members. She stated that the Norwegians "had no way of knowing" whether all (or any) of the delegates were from the PKK.

¶5. (C) She defended Norway's decision to move from the E.U. terrorist designation list (which labeled the PKK as a terrorist organization) to the U.N. terrorist designation list (which does not include the PKK). The rationale for this switch centers around the MFA's extensive peace brokering efforts in Sri Lanka. These efforts involve extensive dealings with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The Norwegian government, expecting the LTTE's designation by the E.U. as a terrorist group, switched to the U.N. designations in order to preserve its ability to deal

directly with the LTTE. Bjornsgaard openly questioned the wisdom of switching designations and the internal confusion within the MFA precipitated by the move.

¶6. (C) Declaring that "actions, not labels, are important," she differentiated the PKK from Hamas, which the Norwegian government would not publicly declare a terrorist organization for various political reasons. When asked if Norway would specifically recognize the PKK as a terrorist organization, she stated that the Norwegians would continue to "condemn groups that perpetuated terrorist acts, if asked."

¶7. (C) Comment. Although the apparent willingness to support U.S.-Norwegian law enforcement/intelligence cooperation is genuine, we doubt whether the PKK is a hot topic within the MFA. Our discussions with Bademli suggested that the Turks have specifically asked for public condemnation of the PKK by the Norwegians. This message questions Bjornsgaard's declaration that "nobody" has asked Norway to label the PKK as a terrorist organization.

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